

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT: MALAWI PERMACULTURE

BETTY CHINYAMUNYAMU: Permaculture is becoming quite renowned. It's a way of farming that involves minimum disturbance to the natural environment. Permaculture is the concept we have been using to promote sustainable food production among communities in Malawi. The idea came in our discussions in the Malawi-U.S. Exchange Alumni Association. When somebody comes back from an exchange program, they share what they learned and the challenges they see in Malawi that they would like to address from the lessons they got from the U.S. I was interested in what I saw in South Carolina where there was a lot of sustainable crop production. We involved the communities and got the people together and explained to them what we're trying to do and asked for a piece of land where we could demonstrate what permaculture was all about. Permaculture mimics what happens naturally so there is very little inorganic fertilization. This is important for the communities that we're working with because they do not have a lot of income and they don't even have a lot of land. From the little piece of land that they've got, they should be able to plant many plants that will support each other and help fertilize each other. Permaculture involves minimum labor, which is very good for those who are sick or women who have so many other multiple responsibilities. It is a concept that has been very well received by the communities where we promoted it in Malawi. At the end of that season, we were able to harvest a lot of crops. The community was very, very surprised.